

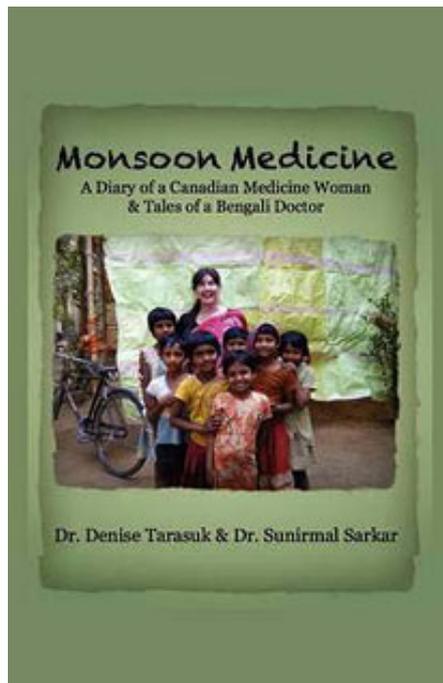
Tarasuk / Sarkar Monsoon Medicine

Leseprobe

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A Homeopathic Hangover

EIGHTY PATIENTS, YOUNG and old, surprised us in Dr. Sarkar's chamber Monday morning. The weather was dreary and the sky was promising to let go of its heavy burden and rain like cats and dogs. Due to the monsoon weather, we thought perhaps we could recover from the ghastly amount of patients that arrived yesterday by train, boat, taxi, rickshaw, ambulance, bicycle, and lastly, barefoot.

After an extremely long day yesterday, my brain hurt from thinking too much. The sensation was a deep, painful, heavy fatigue. It was a feeling I knew would not go away anytime too soon. I had felt this sensation many times before. It was located deep in the frontal cortex of my brain which extended to my occiput. I realized and recognized that I had a *Homeopathic Hangover* that one develops from listening and doing comparison Materia Medica for hours on end.

When all the files in the brain have been filled with data, case histories, and lab test results, a deep unforgiving sensation that doctors do not speak of hits hard. This deep and unforgivable pain or dullness is none other than *brain fag*. Yes, that is the meaning of *brain fag* - that weird archaic little word listed under the remedy *Zincum metallicum* in William Boericke, M.D.'s *Materia Medica*, Ninth Edition.

"Rest!" is what the doctor prescribed...."Take **rest!**," Dr. Sarkar would state with deep conviction in his thick Bengali accent.

Just imagine! How could I rest? Dr. Sarkar was exhausted to the infinity. Yes, that is exactly how he would describe this

deep exhaustion. It is like a terrible flu. "Brain fag to the infinity!" That is the official title we have given to this ghastly feeling inside both our heads! But, rest is for the wicked...

I remember so vividly, Dr. Sarkar telling me a story when I was in medical school, "When a bad or wicked person is reborn, they are born in their next life as a doctor. In this way, they have no free time. They are busy caring for the ill and can pay back their bad karma."

"What did I do in my past life?"

More importantly, what did Dr. Sarkar do in his past life that was so evil? He can drum up enough patients for four doctors to see in one day. The problem is, one never knows if any of the four doctors will show up! Train strikes, holy days, family obligations!

Even though my brain hurts, Monday is my favorite day. The pressure and madness of the weekend is gone and now we can take our time with the patients. We can discuss patient cases more freely without visiting doctors, medical students and residents peering over our backs. The atmosphere is more relaxed on Mondays.

The sky has just let loose and the rain is so heavy and hard that all the patients have crowded into the shocking pink waiting room that contains long, handmade wooden benches. The air is dense, thick, and heavy. I gaze out the window and take a deep breath in. Watching the rain from my little four-legged wooden stool, where I sit for hours listening to case after case, is mesmerizing. The monsoon rain is like a sedative and drives me into a kapha state of dullness.

I think to myself, "Yes, I am in the lush, tropical jungle, located deep within India's State of West Bengal, and it is monsoon season. Just like every year I come during monsoon

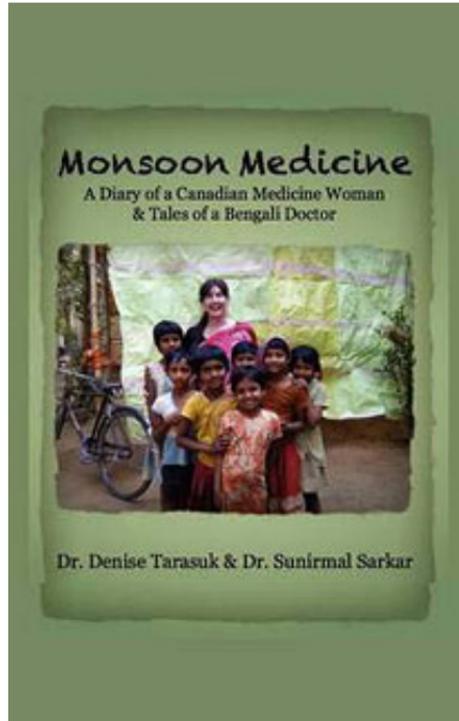
season. I sit, I listen and I observe the patients. I learn *Monsoon Medicine*."

Here in the *Jungle Clinic* I find every case to be interesting. In fact, I would say that most of the cases are incredibly amazing. I think to myself that these cases should be carefully recorded for others to read. *Keynotes*, clinical tips, and pearls bring the cases alive. On second thought, they should be recorded so I can remember!

Just the sheer volume of patients is unbelievable. The *Jungle Clinic* is more like an emergency room. Patients come in ambulances, on rickshaw wagons, and some are carried into the clinic by their families and loved ones. Triage is the name of the game; just the location is different from the typical American hospital.

Perhaps the next patient has had a stroke, as she is unable to walk and drags her left leg far behind. Two strong sons carry their mother into Dr. Sarkar's chamber and help her sit on the wooden chair before us. They tell the story for their mother as she is too confused and unable to utter a word.

The *Jungle Clinic* brings patients from near and far that have very deep pathology; deep, very deep pathology indeed! We see patients daily that have slipped in to comas, patients with brain tumors, various types of cancer, tuberculosis and hepatitis daily. It seems there has been an increase in patients with neurological lesions lately. Patients with brain tumors, spinal cord injuries, and paralysis have been coming daily. I see more neuropathology here in one day that I do in a week in my private practice at home. The patients with neurological lesions and rare pathology show steady improvement.



Tarasuk / Sarkar

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& Tales of a Bengali Doctor

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